



May 2012 Newsletter

May is National Foster Care Month

When you think of the word *orphan*, you may envision a child in Africa whose parents have died of AIDS or in a civil war, but in addition to the worldwide orphan crisis, we have our own orphan crisis right here at home in the US. Currently there are **over 400,000 kids in the US foster care system, over 115,000 of which are waiting to be adopted.**

According to local resources, **in Imperial County alone, there are between 250 and 300 children in foster care** at any given time and there has been about a 30% increase in the last year of children being removed from their homes due to drug related and socio-economic conditions.

About 20-25% of the children in foster care in Imperial County are waiting for a family to adopt them. Of those children waiting for forever families, about 60% are over the age of 12. These older children need and deserve forever families just as much as the younger ones, but not only are they usually not wanted by adoptive families, but often times they are even sent out of County because there aren't enough foster homes that want or specialize in older youth. This is a tragedy.

There are anywhere from 5-15 foster-adoptions annually in Imperial County. Amaris Ministries is motivated to do whatever we can to help change this situation so that instead of children waiting for families, there are actually families from the church that have stood in the gap and are waiting for children to adopt! It used to be the church's job to care for the orphans, it's only in the last 50 years or so that this job has transitioned to the government. **It is the goal of Amaris Ministries to have ZERO waiting kids in Imperial Valley,** but instead, to have an abundance of families, waiting to lovingly welcome these children into their homes.

Please pray about the ultimate James 1:27 ministry of **"...caring for orphans in their time of need..."** and consider fostering or adopting a child who needs a permanent family. If you would like more information on what it would take to do this, please give us a call.

Family Friends

If you are unable to take a child into your home but your heart is burdened to help these kids, consider becoming a **"Family Friend"** by donating your support services – this can be anything from helping out with cooking, cleaning and respite care, to professional services such as medical, dental and mechanical and everything in between. Feel free to call us with ideas of how you might help.



Thank You!!!

Amaris Ministries wishes to express our deep gratitude for the **County staff and social workers**, as well as **local attorneys**, who work on behalf of the safety and well being of the children. They are wonderful people with hearts for the kids and we need to be committed to lifting them up in prayer for wisdom and guidance. **Please pray** for their own families as well.

A Prayer for Foster Care

MANY KIDS IN FOSTER CARE FEEL LIKE THEY DON'T HAVE A PRAYER...LET'S CHANGE THAT!

National Foster Care Prayer Vigil

May 20-27, 2012

WHO can host a prayer vigil? Anyone, especially YOU!

WHEN should we do it: Anytime the month of May

WHERE should we do it: Anywhere you can get people together

HOW many people should come? "for where two or three come together in My name, there am I with the." Matt. 18:20

Please take this opportunity to pray for the children, workers, and the families in our nation's foster care system. Perhaps most importantly, use this opportunity to ask God to work in His church on behalf of the children, to change our hearts, and use us in their lives. For more info go to www.fostercareprayervigil.org

Since we have started:

- Amaris Ministries has had the opportunity to :
 - Counsel 3 women with unplanned pregnancies
 - Place 5 kids in SAFE Homes
 - Walk 4 families through the foster care system
 - Have 3 families on file waiting to adopt
 - Reunite 3 children from SAFE homes with their mother.

How you can help:

- Donate** – If you feel led to support what we are doing to fulfill God's promises for families- you may send a check in the enclosed envelope.
- Participate** – If you feel called to take children into your home as a SAFE family, foster family, or adoptive family please let us know!

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these...you did for me." Matt. 25:40

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